

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 HA-05

TRSE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /068 W

-----059793 171722Z /73

O 171605Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE ASHDC IMMEDIATE 4246

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FOR INR FROM VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS:UR

SUBJECT: POPE PAUL'S STATEMENT ON SOVIET TRIALS

REF: STATE 178559

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF JULY 16 STATEMENT BY POPE PAUL ON
SOVIET TRIALS:

QTE. IT HAD ALREADY BEEN OUR INTENTION TO DEDICATE THE
SHORT EXHORTATION OF THIS SUMMER SUNDAY TO THE REAWAKENING
OF THE MORAL CONSCIENCE, INVITED BY THE MATURITY OF ITS CON-
TEMPLATION, FROM THE NEW PAGE, WHICH IN THE LIFE OF EUROPE AND
FOR CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, HAS BEEN OPENED BY THE SOLEMN
DECLARATIONS OF HELSINKI, WITH THE CLEAR OBJECTIVE OF RENEWING
COMMITMENTS NOT ONLY ON PATT OF INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS BUT EVEN
MORE SO BY THE COLLECTIVITY OF PEOPLE (NATIONS), AD NOT ONLY
CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF THEIR INVIOABLE SINGLE SOVEREIGNTY,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME HAPPILY LINKED WITH EACH OTHER, FOR THE
PROGRESSIVE AND COMMON GOOD OF ALL HUMANITY. HELSINKI, IN WHOSE
MEETINGS THE HOLY SEE WITH STUDIED AND CLOSE ATTENTION ALSO
PARTICIPATED, WANTS TO BE A DECISIVE AND PROGRESSIVE MOMENT
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FOR HUMAN SOCIETY. BUT THE FACT THAT PROCEEDINGS HAVE TAKEN
PLACE (IN THE SOVIET UNION) CONCERNING WHICH ALL THE PRESS
TALKS ABOUT, OBLIGES US ALSO TO EXPRESS OUR SORROW, NOT FOR
POLEMIC PASSIONS, BUT IN ORDER TO CONFIRM OUR FIDELITY IN
THE UNITED AND PROGRESSIVE MATURATION OF THE MORAL SENSE OF
ALL HUMANITY.

WE FEEL OBLIGED BY THE SENTENCES WHICH WERE INFLICTED WITH GREAT SEVERITY ON THE ACCUSED, AS IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE, FOR IDEOLOGICAL INFRACTIONS, BUT ALSO BY OUR COMMITMENTS AT HELSINKI, TO RECALL THAT SPIRIT OF HUMAN FEELING WITH WHICH WE ARE FILLED. WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO FORMULATE JUDGMENTS WHEN IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION, NO ONE COULD AVOID NOTICING THE UNANIMOUS (WORLD) REACTION. THIS (REACTION) IS STIMULATED BY THE LACK OF PUBLICITY ON THE PROCEEDINGS, BY THE FEELING THAT THE RIGHTS OF DEFENSE BY THE DISPROPORTION BETWEEN THE PENALTY AND THE ACCUSATIONS, HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY PROTECTED, BUT ABOVE ALL BY THE CONVICTION--WHICH TODAY IS THE UNIVERSAL PAYRIMONY OF CULTURE AND SOCIETY--THAT A POLITICAL OPINION OR THE CLAIM OF A RIGHT CANNOT, AS SUCH, BE PROSECUTED AND PUNISHED AS A CRIME. IS IT AN ABUSE, IS IT AN INTERFERENCE, THIS SOLIDARITY WHICH IS PROPAGATED ACROSS NATIONAL FRONTIERS WHEN AT STAKE ARE THE RIGHTS OF MAN? OR IS IT NOT A SIGN OF HUMANITY'S SHARING IN AN IDEAL, WHICH PENETRATES AT ALL LEVELS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE RECOGNITION WHICH IT FINDS IN SOLEMN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS?

IT IS BECAUSE TO US IT APPEARS THAT SUCH SENSIBILITY IS NOT SUBVERSIVE BUT AN ELEMENT FOR THE PROMOTION OF BETTER RELATIONS AMONG PEOPLE AND AMONG NATIONS, WHICH LEADS US TO EXPRESS A HOPE: THAT IN THAT GREAT COUNTRY (THE SOVIET UNION) (AND) THAT PEOPLE, WHICH IS NOTED FOR ITS EXTRAORDINARY HUMAN RICHNESS AND TO WHICH WE RESPECTFULLY DIRECT OUR THOUGHT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT ALL THE COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE OF THE WORLD COULD FIND THEMSELVES UNITED IN A COMMON TRIBUTE AND IN THE PRACTICAL AFFIRMATION OF THE GREAT IDEAL OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN. AND THAT THE SUFFERING OF THE CONDEMNED AND THEIR FAMILIES, TO WHOM WE ALSO DEDICATE TODAY'S PRAYERS, BE CONVERTED INTO A HIGHER GOOD FOR THEIR OWN COUNTRY AND HUMANITY. UNQTE.

2. THE VATICAN ORGAN, OSSERVATORE ROMANO IN ITS SUNDAY, JULY 16, EDITION IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "WORLD PUBLIC OPINION DEPLORES THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION" CARRIES APPROVINGLY STATEMENT MADE BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN BONN, JULY 15, AND REFERS TO THE PROSPECTIVE VISIT IN WASHINGTON OF MRS. SHCHARANSKY WITH VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE.

3. COMMENT: BY VATICAN STANDARDS, POPE'S MESSAGE, THOUGH CAREFULLY WORDED, TANTAMOUNTS TO AN UNEQUIVOCAL CONDEMNATION OF SOVIET TRIALS. THE POPE'S PROMPTNESS IN MAKING STATEMENT AND THE CLARITY WITH WHICH HE DEALS WITH THE FAULTS OF THE SO-CALLED TRIALS HAS SURPRISED MOST VATICAN OBSERVERS. NEVERTHELESS THE ACTION IS IN LINE WITH THE PRINCIPAL THRUST OF THE POPE'S JANUARY 1978 SPEECH TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ACCREDITED TO THE VATICAN IN WHICH HE PLACED THE VATICAN AND

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH SQUARELY BEHIND THE PROMOTION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POPE, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME13123
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780292-1239
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780752/aaaabrqm.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4be57f72-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 178559
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1985648
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POPE PAUL'S STATEMENT ON SOVIET TRIALS
TAGS: SHUM, UR, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4be57f72-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014